petroleum infrastructure, including domestic refineries has been set up in the country. We have now become net exporters of petroleum products. Further capacity addition is being planned in the country both by the public and private sector companies by the end of XIth Plan. It is expected that the country's requirement of petroleum products will be met fully and further the country would be exporting petroleum products.

(d) and (e) Government has taken several initiatives for promoting alternative fuels including bio-fuels, hydrogen and fuels cells and development of electric and hybrid vehicles. MOP and NG has notified *vide* notification No. 580(E) dt 20th September, 2006 that subject to commercial viability, the Oil Marketing Companies shall sell 5% ethanol blended-petrol as per Bureau of Indian Standard specification through out the country except North Eastern States, J&K, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep *w.e.f.* 01.11.2006. As regards bio-diesel, this Ministry has announced a bio-diesel Purchase Policy which has provided for 20 Purchase Centres to be set up by OMCs all over the country, where these companies would purchase bio-diesel which meet the standards prescribed by Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) at a price valid for six months. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy is carrying out R&D activities on applications of bio-diesel for stationary and transport applications including testing diesel engines using different blend levels of bio-diesel with diesel. That Ministry has set up a National Hydrogen Energy Board and prepared the National Hydrogen Energy Road Map which provides pathway for production, storage and use of Hydrogen Energy in the country upto 2020.

Projected rise in demand of natural gas over Eleventh Plan period

828. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the demand for natural gas is projected to rise from 79 million metric standard cubic meters per day in 2007-08 to 280 MMSCMD by the end of the Eleventh Plan period in 2011-12;

(b) whether the import of LNG, which began in 2004 is also projected to increase to 23.75 million metric tonne per annum;

(c) if so, the estimated Government investment for gas during the Eleventh Plan; and

(d) the steps Government have taken to bridge the gap between demand and supply of natural gas in the country, till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) According to the report of Working Group on Petroleum and Natural Gas for the Eleventh Plan, the demand for natural gas in the country is projected to increase from 179.17 million standard cubic meters per day (MMSCMD) in 2007-08 to 279.43 MMSCMD in 2011-12.

(b) According to the report, the LNG import is projected to increase to 23.75 million tonnes per annum (MMTPA) by 2011-12.

(c) An investment of about Rs. 40,000 crores has been projected in the natural gas sector during the Eleventh Plan period (2007-12).

(d) The Government of India has adopted a multi-pronged strategy to augment supplies and to bridge the gap between supply and demand for the domestic market through:

- Intensification of domestic Exploration and Production activities under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP),
- Exploitation of unconventional gas, like Coal Bed Methane (CBM),
- Implementation of Natural Gas Hydrate Programme (NGHP) for evaluation of hydrate resources and their possible commercial exploitation,
- Import of gas as LNG, and implementation of transnational gas pipelines.

Promotion of oil and gas market

829. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Government have taken for uninterrupted and adequate supply of petroleum products and natural gas in all parts of the country;

(b) the concrete steps that have so far been taken by Government to promote internal/external market; and

(c) whether he has submitted any duty recast/revamp economic package